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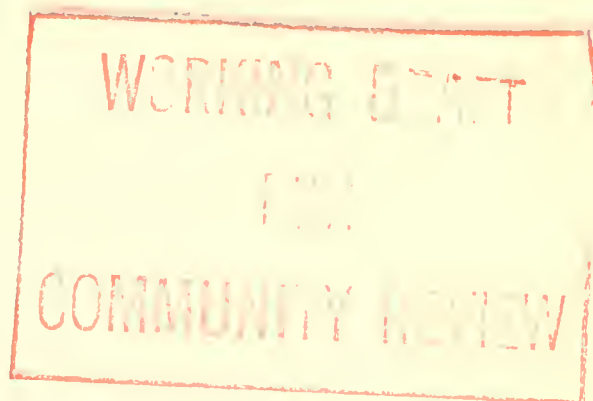
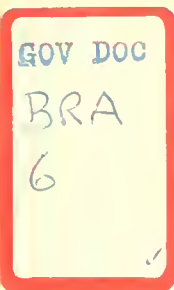
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EAST BOSTON

Background Information, Planning Issues and
Preliminary Neighborhood Improvement Strategies

City of Boston
Boston Redevelopment Authority
District Planning Program

June, 1975



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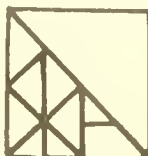
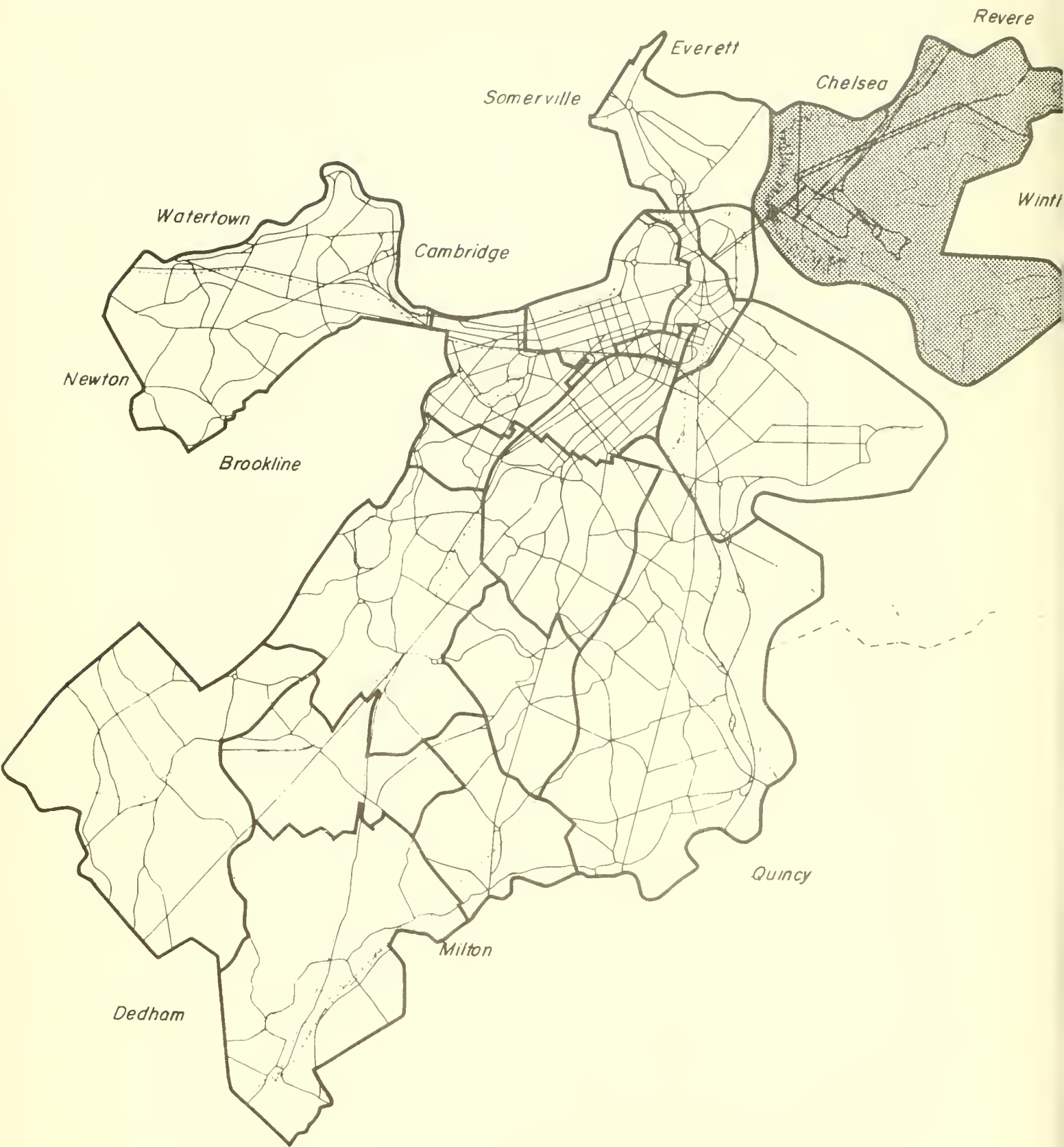
INTRODUCTION

This report prepared by the East Boston District Planner is a draft document meant to structure discussion among residents and City representatives on planning strategies and investment needs.

Toward this end, it establishes a base of population, income and housing data as well as a listing and analysis of recent past public and private investment in East Boston. This information can be used by the District Planner and others involved in the planning process, by neighborhood residents, Little City Hall staff and other City agencies and departments.

Second, it offers an analysis of the major issues which confront the community along with recommended strategies to address these issues. These strategies should form the basis of discussion for community residents for the Community Development Revenue Sharing and Capital Improvement participation process as well as for involvement in issues which are not addressed by City expenditures such as rezoning, private development or State funded programs.

Third, the report recognizes that strategies are not self-fulfilling and makes recommendations for investments, both public and private, which are necessary to help carry through the recommended strategies. It also sets forth a yearly work program which the community planner can follow to achieve the desired results.



EAST BOSTON



A. SHORT HISTORY

Noddle's Island was annexed to the City of Boston in 1637 but remained an isolated agricultural area supplying fresh meat and wood to the City for nearly 200 years. In 1833, General William Sumner organized the East Boston Company which bought the island, changed its name to East Boston, and established a ferry service to the downtown area. The Company began to develop waterfront oriented industrial uses and provide railroad service to the north. East Boston was also promoted in this period as a summer resort. An orderly grid pattern of streets was laid out, the 80 room Maverick House hotel was constructed in Maverick Square and fine houses with hilltop views of the harbor were built in the Eagle Hill and Jeffries Point areas. Many of these houses remain today.

From 1840 to 1865, the needs of international shipping spurred the rapid development of East Boston. Famous clipper ships were constructed and outfitted, and sailed routes to California, the East Indies and China. The Boston terminal for England's Cunard Lines was established in East Boston in 1840. The ability to transfer goods directly from ship to railroad was an important asset and the addition of a terminal for the Grand Junction Railroad gave East Boston direct connections to all the manufacturing centers of New England. The population climbed from 1,455 persons in 1840 to 20,572 in 1865, with large suburban homes being developed on the hills and more modest dwellings in the area around Maverick Square.

The decline of wooden shipbuilding caused the exodus of skilled craftsmen from East Boston at a time when many Irish immigrants were arriving to take their place. Housing for the immigrants was made available by the subdivision of the existing housing and the construction of tenements. As the population continued to grow and the area began to lose its spacious suburban quality, wealthier families began to leave East Boston. Around 1880, the Breed's Island (now Orient Heights) section of East Boston was opened to development and more expensive single family homes were developed. The pace of development was slow and the last lots were not sold off until 1912. Successive waves of immigrants, primarily Jews and then Italians, pushed the population of East Boston to a peak level of approximately 60,000 which was maintained from 1916 through 1935. The Italian immigrants formed a strong community structure in East Boston which continues to be the area's predominant cultural influence.

After 70 years of ferry service, East Boston was connected to downtown by a subway tunnel in 1905. Further transportation developments, the airport in 1923 and the Sumner Tunnel in 1934 planted the seeds for future community problems when the rapid expansion of aviation and postwar suburban development caused tremendous growth in the use of these facilities. Commuter and airport traffic provided the primary reasons for the development, from 1949-1961, of airport access roads, the expressway through East Boston and the Callahan Tunnel. The introduction of jet aircraft during the 1960's added a new dimension to East Boston's problems with regional transportation facilities.

From 1940 to about 1970, population declined in East Boston as a result of factors which have affected most urban communities. Contributing to the general pattern of out-migration of families to suburban areas were such factors as increase in automobile ownership, improved highways, a desire for greater open space, the decline of some urban industries, the relocation of other expanding industries to modern suburban facilities and the attractiveness of newer suburban schools with large amounts of recreation space. In addition, East Boston suffered from the impact of air pollution, noise and congestion created by a growing airport and by increasing commuter traffic, as well as from the unpleasant appearance of declining industrial property adjacent to residential areas.

The physical development of East Boston occurred almost entirely within the period from 1835-1915. The major physical changes since 1915 have been the growth of regional transportation facilities, particularly the tunnels, McClellan Highway and the airport. The way of life of the people, what they expect and need from a residential environment, and the economics of the early industrial base have changed substantially since 1915. East Boston is now faced with adapting the physical environment which it has inherited to the needs of a modern residential community.

B. EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

OVERVIEW

With its population reduced to approximately 39,000 people and just recently beginning to increase again, East Boston today is a stable community. Most residents live in family groups, 91% as opposed to 78% City-wide, and except for a higher percentage of young adults leaving the community, East Boston's age distribution is similar to that of the rest of the City with slightly fewer elderly and slightly more children than the City average.

The median family income in East Boston was somewhat less than that for the City in 1970. This is due more to a comparative lack of upper income families than to a concentration of very low income families. Census data show that East Boston's wage earners tend to hold lesser skilled jobs or jobs in which skills are acquired through apprenticeship. This is a reflection of a level of formal education lower than the City average. Statistics indicate that the youth of East Boston continue to receive less education in terms of years spent in school and consequently have less access to the kinds of professional, technical, clerical and "service" type jobs which are increasing most rapidly in the Boston economy.

Rent levels in East Boston are substantially lower than the City average. The value of owner-occupied homes reported in the 1970 U.S. Census was also low with 52% estimated to be worth less than \$15,000 while only 25% City-wide were in this category. The vast majority of residential structures in East Boston are over 50 years old with only 12% built after 1939. While these dwellings represent an important low-cost housing resource, many of them are in need of substantial repairs.

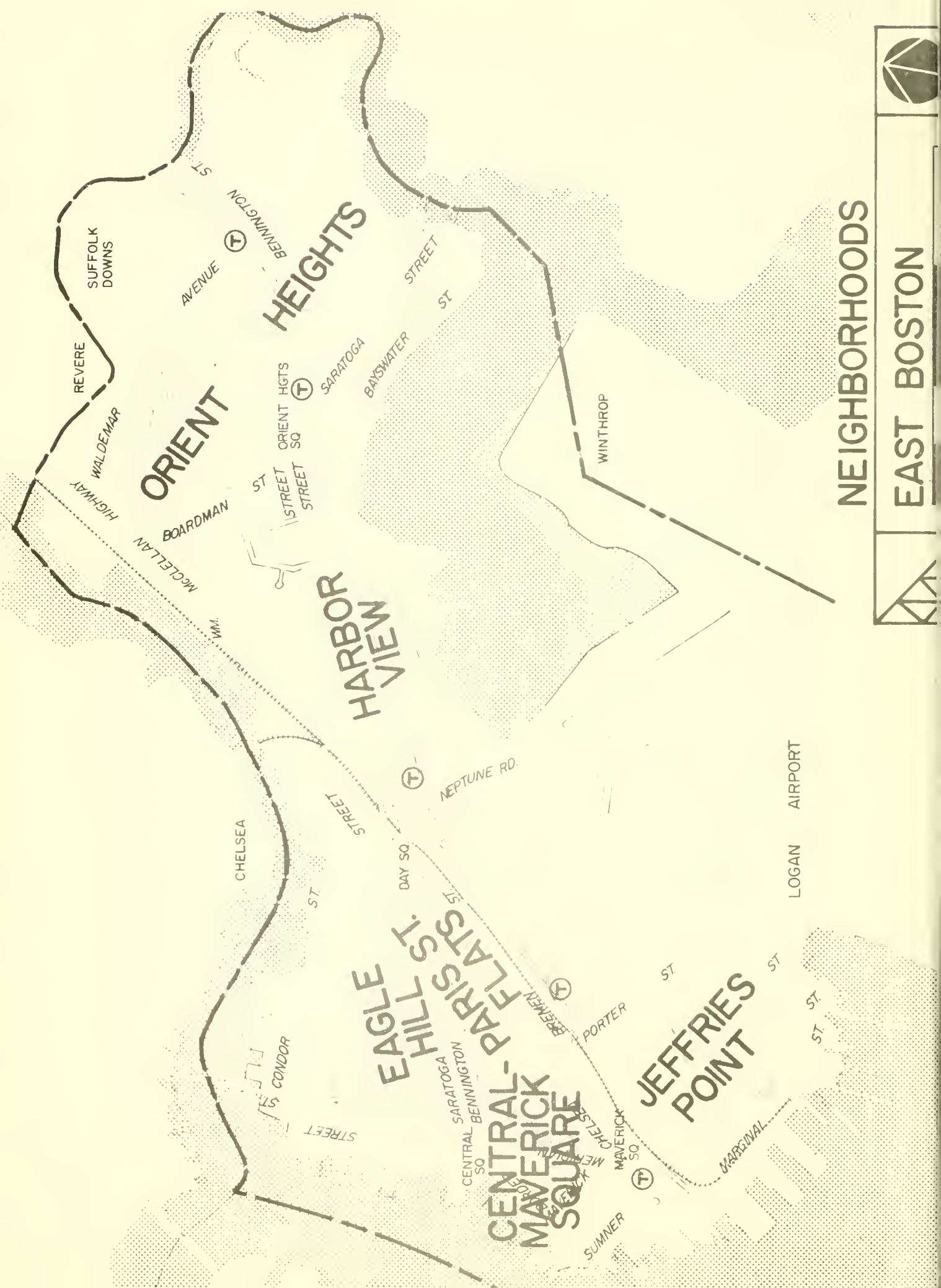
East Boston has a strong community structure which has been enhanced by a number of factors. Home ownership is high for an urban area. The presence of a resident owner in over 80% of the residential structures containing 1-4 apartments greatly strengthens the community and encourages a higher level of maintenance and community concern. Both owners and tenants tend to live in the same place for longer periods of time than in other parts of the City. The strong ethnic nature of the Italian community also contributes to the sense of neighborhood.

The following statistics from the 1970 U.S. Census indicate some of the factors which distinguish East Boston from the City as a whole:

	<u>East Boston</u>	<u>City</u>
Living in family groups	91 %	78 %
Age groups		
Under age 15	25.4%	23.9%
Ages 15-34	28.1%	33.9%
Ages 35-59	30.1%	24.7%
Ages 60 and over	16.4%	17.5%
In same residence for over 10 years		
Owner-occupants	72 %	58 %
Renters	32 %	19 %
Median family income	\$ 8,620	\$ 9,133
Families earning \$15,000 or more	12 %	18 %
Families earning less than \$5,000	22 %	22 %
Median monthly contract rent	\$ 67	\$ 98
Median value of owner-occupied units	\$14,721	\$19,600
Units needing repairs in excess of \$1,000	42 %	29 %

NEIGHBORHOODS

East Boston is a peninsula divided into a residential community and an international airport. The community may be described in terms of six neighborhoods: Jeffries Point, Central/Maverick Square, Eagle Hill, Paris Street Flats, Harbor View and Orient Heights.



NEIGHBORHOODS

EAST BOSTON

1. Jeffries Point

Jeffries Point at the southern end of East Boston is bounded by the Penn Central Railroad on the west, Porter Street and Logan Airport on the north, and Boston Harbor on the south and east. It is one of the oldest and most densely settled areas in the community. Two and three decker rowhouses cover the hill between the airport and Marginal Street and overlook the harbor and downtown Boston. Although not subject to overflights, Jeffries Point residents are affected by aircraft ground noise at the airport.

Along the waterfront are located scattered airport-related industries, Bethlehem Steel, and Piers 1-4. Because many of the old waterfront industries have given way to less intensive uses, attention has recently focused on reuses of waterfront property. The City has encouraged new uses which support the predominantly residential character of Jeffries Point and has acquired and developed a 4-acre park at the end of the Point. Massport, on the other hand, has proposed a container shipping facility at Piers 1-4, a reuse which could be disruptive to the neighborhood.

2. Central/Maverick Square

The Central/Maverick Square neighborhood lies between Jeffries Point and the Inner Harbor and consists of Central Square, in many ways the nerve center of East Boston, Maverick Square, a transportation node and secondary shopping center, and the residential community between the two squares. Since the 19th Century when the area was the locus of intense industrial and commercial activity, it has seen the decline of its industry and the growth of its use as a regional transportation link. Meridian Street carries traffic between Boston and Chelsea, and the Sumner-Callahan Tunnels carry traffic between Boston, the airport and the North Shore.

Central Square serves as a magnet for shoppers from East Boston and to some extent from Winthrop and Revere. It has a modern shopping plaza, a wide variety of stores and convenient parking. In the center of the square is a park and nearby are a library, a neighborhood health center, and several other public facilities. Maverick Square is just a few blocks south of Central Square on Meridian Street. Although smaller than Central Square, it has an MBTA station, Little City Hall, and convenience shops which attract people from nearby neighborhoods. As a result of new housing developments on the waterfront, its importance will be increasing in the future.

The residential neighborhood between the two squares consists of the 414-unit Maverick Housing Project and 3-story brick or frame rowhouses with straight front or bay windows. Almost 75% of the homes in this area are in need of substantial

repairs but some rehabilitation and a good deal of new housing development is occurring. An 11-acre waterfront park is being acquired and developed by the City and the 300-unit Sumner Street Elderly Housing Development will soon be completed. A 319-unit mixed income development is planned for the Border Street area just below Central Square and the City has proposed a mixed housing-commercial-open space development on the waterfront below Maverick Square (NDP II).

3. Eagle Hill

Eagle Hill is located north of Central Square and Bennington Street and runs from the Inner Harbor to the Chelsea Creek/Day Square area. The neighborhood is characterized by three decker rowhouses which have been occupied by the same families for several generations. While less than 40% of the units in Eagle Hill are in need of substantial repairs, each spring a bustle of painting and sprucing up activity takes place there. The neighborhood is also experiencing a burst of new housing development with the construction of Shore Plaza East, a 380-unit low and moderate income housing development, and Landfall West, a 59-unit elderly housing development. In addition, construction has begun on the new Barnes Middle School on Border Street which is scheduled to be completed by fall of 1976. This will be a community school with its recreational and educational facilities open to all East Boston residents.

4. Paris Street Flats

The Paris Street Flats section is a triangular area bounded by Porter, Bremen and Bennington Streets. Two of its sides are further defined by the East Boston Expressway and the Penn Central Railroad. Most of the homes in this neighborhood are three and four story rowhouses with little or no open space. Almost 75% of them are in need of substantial repairs. Residents near Day Square are in the flight path of Runway 15R and those along Bremen Street are threatened by the encroachment of air freight, rent-a-car and other airport-related industrial uses.

5. Harbor View

Harbor View extends along Bennington Street from Day Square to Orient Heights. Although sometimes confined to that section east of Day Square and south of Bennington Street which really has a "harbor view", our definition also includes the Neptune Road area and the section north of Bennington Street where the 402 apartments of Brandywine Village are located. One and two family homes contain half of all the dwelling units in the neighborhood. Most homes have yards and many of the streets are lined with trees. The Neptune Road area, once the entrance to Wood Island Park, still reflects the stately character of the neighborhood's past. Today Harbor View suffers from the disruption of the MBTA tracks which cut through it, from the noise of the airport, and from the taking of Wood Island Park for Runway 15R.

6. Orient Heights

Orient Heights at the northeastern end of East Boston is characterized by the prominent hill, formerly Breed's Hill, on the northwest side of Bennington Street and the gently sloping topography leading to the Bayswater shore southeast of Bennington Street. Prominent landmarks are the gold-crowned tower originally intended as the pedestal for the statue of the "Madonna of the Universe" on the top of the hill, and the cross on the end of the hill visible from McClellan Highway. The neighborhood is bounded to the west by the Chelsea Creek and to the east by Belle Isle Inlet. To the north is the City of Revere and to the south is filled land below Boardman Street.

Orient Heights is a pleasant residential community with sloping, quiet streets and single family homes with small yards and beautiful views in all directions. Although it includes the 354-unit Orient Heights Housing Project, one and two family structures contain 44% of the dwelling units, and 88% of the structures with 1-4 units are owner-occupied. The median income of \$9,400 is the highest in East Boston and only 18% of its dwelling units need substantial repairs. Although the Bayswater section is heavily impacted by aircraft noise, Orient Heights remains one of East Boston's most livable areas.

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS - EAST BOSTON
(1970 U.S. Census Data)

<u>POPULATION</u>	<u>Jeffries Point</u>	<u>Central/ Maverick Sq.</u>	<u>Eagle Hill</u>	<u>Paris St. Flats</u>	<u>Harbor View</u>	<u>Orient Heights</u>	<u>East Boston</u>	<u>City of Boston</u>
Total in 1970	6,798	3,445	12,737	4,058	5,111	6,724	38,873	639,803
Change from '60	-21%	-23%	-13%	-18%	+26%	-6%	-11%	-8%
Total Black in 1970	14	165	6	10	31	100	326	104,206
<u>AGE GROUPS</u>								
Under Age 15	1,628	1,037	3,395	911	1,341	1,573	9,984	152,541
Change from '60	-30%	-27%	-15%	-32%	+24%	-24%	-18%	-11%
Ages 15-34	1,893	949	3,668	1,064	1,525	1,821	10,920	217,068
Change from '60	-21%	-21%	-12%	-24%	+41%	0%	-10%	-11%
Ages 35-59	2,160	943	3,749	1,321	1,450	2,065	11,698	157,865
Change from '60	-20%	-21%	-14%	-19%	-8%	-6%	-15%	-24%
Ages 60 and Over	1,113	514	1,925	762	795	1,265	6,374	112,080
Change from '60	-12%	-21%	-5%	0%	+46%	+23%	-7%	-9%
<u>INCOME</u>								
Median Family	\$8,205	\$7,100	\$8,801	\$8,023	\$9,084	\$9,405	\$8,620	\$9,133
Families under \$5,000	25%	38%	19%	30%	13%	20%	22%	22%
<u>HOUSING</u>								
Occupied Units	3,422	1,190	4,144	1,461	1,613	2,144	13,574	217,623
Occupied Units in Structures With 1-4 Units	77%	57%	97%	98%	84%	79%	87%	61%
Owner-Occupied Structures With 1-4 Units	84%	71%	82%	78%	69%	88%	81%	81%
Units Needing Substantial Repairs (in excess of \$1,000)	830	960	1,680	1,150	790	390	5,800	67,102
Market Condition	Fair-Strong	Fair	Fair-Strong	Fair	Fair-Strong	Strong	Fair-Strong	Stable

C. PAST PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT

PAST PUBLIC INVESTMENT

The major thrust of the City's capital investment from 1968-1974 has been toward strengthening neighborhoods through the construction or renovation of community facilities, parks, and streets. The City spent \$679,676 in the renovation of playground facilities at American Legion Playground, East Boston Stadium, Souza Park, Noyes Playground, Paris Street Playground and the passive recreation area at Brophy Park. It improved the Sumner and Lamson Playground and McLean Playground facilities at a cost of \$63,281. The Paris Street pool was constructed at a cost of \$700,000. Renovations were made on a street hockey facility at Jeffries Point, on the Paris Street Gym, the East Boston Health Center and Police District 7 at a cost of \$795,000. In addition, 3.6 miles of street construction, 5.0 miles of sidewalk construction and 4.7 miles of sewer and water work was completed.

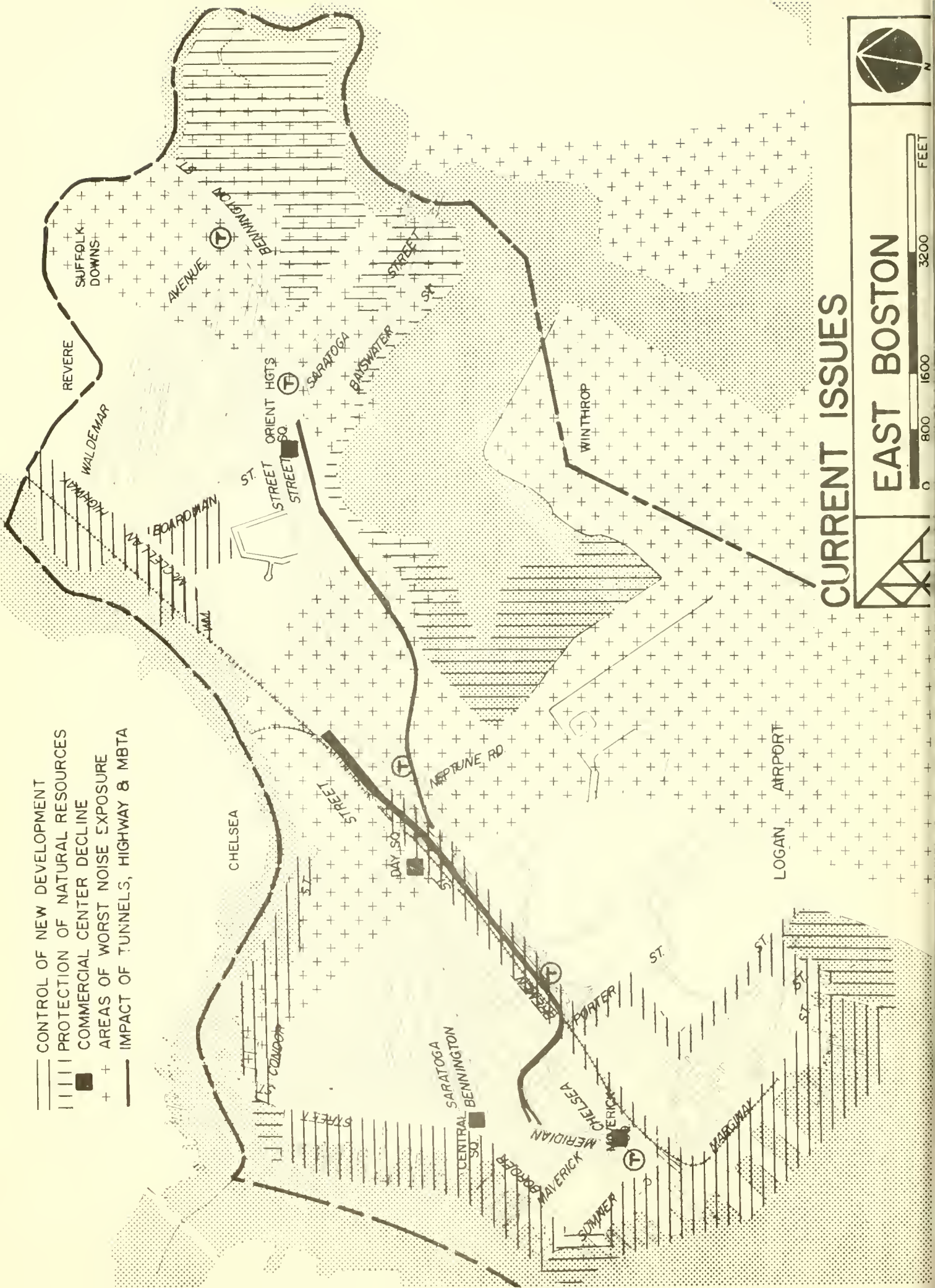
Public effort in housing increased during the 1968-1974 period. However, since most of this investment was in the form of mortgage commitments for the new developments now under construction, the effects are yet to come.

PAST PRIVATE INVESTMENT

Perhaps due in part to public investment in residential neighborhoods, East Boston has seen an increase in private investment over the past five years. A majority of this investment has been in housing construction and rehabilitation. In addition to the Sumner Street Elderly Housing Development which involved mostly public monies, two housing developments were begun with mostly private monies--the Shore Plaza East and Landfall West developments of 380 and 59 units respectively--and mortgage commitments were given on at least one other private development, Boston East. Private rehabilitation of one, two and three family homes is occurring in almost every neighborhood. Although the individual homeowner may spend only a few thousand dollars, the number of homes being rehabilitated is impressive.

A review of building permits for construction in excess of \$10,000 from 1968 to 1974 reveals that at the same time private investment is occurring in housing, it is also occurring on a lesser scale in the commercial, industrial and institutional sectors. A significant part of this investment is in airport-related uses such as warehousing, air freight and rent-a-car operations.

- CONTROL OF NEW DEVELOPMENT
- ||||| PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES
- COMMERCIAL CENTER DECLINE
- + + AREAS OF WORST NOISE EXPOSURE
- IMPACT OF TUNNELS, HIGHWAY & MBTA



CURRENT ISSUES

EAST BOSTON

0 800 1600 3200 FEET



D. PLANNING ISSUES AND PRELIMINARY STRATEGIES

1. NEGATIVE INFLUENCES ON QUALITY OF RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Issue

Almost all issues in East Boston relate in one way or another to the issue of protecting and enhancing residential neighborhoods. Today the neighborhoods are faced with a number of problems. Age and deferral of needed repairs have led to the deterioration of much of the housing stock; a high percentage of homes are in need of substantial repairs. There is also a lack of variety in the types of housing available which has been one cause for young families with rising incomes to leave East Boston. Vacant lots are poorly maintained and unprotected property has been vandalized. Old industries exist on the borders of residential neighborhoods and new industries, such as air freight and rent-a-car operations, threaten to further disrupt these neighborhoods. Finally, despite recent substantial public investments, East Boston still has a need for more and improved public facilities.

Strategies

Although some private rehabilitation and new construction is already occurring in East Boston, the City should use a combination of rehabilitation and code enforcement incentives to preserve and upgrade the existing housing stock. The Mayor's Housing Improvement Program (MHIP) can be used by owner-occupants of 1-6 unit structures to bring their buildings up to code standards. Code enforcement can be used if a few property owners refuse to correct serious code violations in an area where voluntary rehab efforts are making headway. Abandoned and unsafe structures should be torn down and the property cleared under the City's Demolition Program.

The City and the community should encourage the broadening of housing options by supporting moderate amounts of new housing construction in a variety of types, sizes and costs. There are still a few areas in East Boston where one and two family detached homes can be built. With the trend toward families having fewer children and consequently more income to spend on housing, there is also a need for one and two bedroom middle income (and some upper income) apartments. Some of these opportunities will be available with the opening of Shore Plaza East, Landfall West and the Sumner Street Elderly Housing Development. Others can be provided in the proposed NDP II development on the waterfront and in developments like the Boston East proposal on Border Street and the CDC proposal on Marginal Street.

Confidence in the value of upgrading residential property should be strengthened by both public and private efforts to clean up vacant lots and reduce vandalism. Youth activity programs combined with the construction of youth centers in areas now lacking them would provide youngsters with constructive rather than destructive outlets for their energies. Attention should be given to the feasibility of using foot patrolmen, security guards or resident caretakers at public buildings, construction sites, parks and other areas subject to vandalism. The City-funded Vacant Lot Program can be used to clean up vacant lots on a temporary basis. For the longer run, private owners of vacant lots should be urged to properly maintain them or when the situation warrants the City should acquire those appropriate for neighborhood use. Vacant lots owned by the City should be better maintained or transferred to abutters for their care and use.

Industrial uses should be located away from residential neighborhoods to reduce the traffic, noise and negative visual impact they have upon these areas. The proximity of industrial and residential uses was warranted in the pre-automobile era when people wanted to live as near as possible to their place of work; but, today priorities have changed. Although industries and their jobs are needed in East Boston, efforts should be made through zoning and the development of an industrial park to encourage intensified industrial activity within areas separate or buffered from residential areas and to discourage or prohibit it within neighborhoods.

Finally, the City should enhance the quality of East Boston's neighborhoods by providing more recreation and open space amenities and by making capital improvements in strategic areas. Older residents have watched their community slowly lose the amenities that made East Boston such a good place to live when they were young. The trees that once lined many streets are now gone and Wood Island, the 65-acre park designed by Frederick Law Olmstead, has been taken by Massport for a runway. As a result of such losses, East Boston residents have only half as much open space per capita as the rest of the City. The City has responded by planting trees along streets, by making improvements to existing recreation facilities and by committing funds to the acquisition and development of two new waterfront parks. These efforts must be continued and other capital improvements made as well. Streets should be resurfaced, sidewalks reconstructed, and water and sewer improvements made in the areas of greatest need. Attention should be given to the rehabilitation of fire stations, libraries and other public facilities. Above all, substantial investments should be made in the rehabilitation/soundproofing or replacement of school buildings. Such measures can begin to upgrade the quality of East Boston's residential neighborhoods and to maintain private investment confidence.

2. DECLINE OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CENTERS

Issue

Improved highways, increased automobile ownership, and the development of "one stop" shopping at large suburban malls have weakened the viability of the neighborhood commercial center. Yet it still performs an important function, providing a convenience for some, a necessity for others, and adding to the quality of life in an urban community.

There are four shopping areas in East Boston: Central Square, Maverick Square, Day Square and Orient Heights shopping centers. Although each has a few distinct problems, they share many problems in common. They tend to consist of small stores without a great variety of merchandise under one roof. The buildings in which they are located are generally old, presenting certain structural problems for modern merchandising techniques, and need exterior facelifting to make them more visually attractive. The layout of the buildings, streets and sidewalks do not facilitate convenient pedestrian and vehicular circulation. The lack of sufficient off-street parking leads to double parking and traffic congestion which further reduce shopping convenience, and crime and vandalism present a constant threat to their viability.

Strategies

To revitalize these local shopping centers, the joint effort of the public and private sectors will be required. The merchants themselves must take the lead but the City can make significant contributions. Toward this end, the City has begun a Neighborhood Commercial Center Revitalization Program which will focus in the forthcoming year on working with merchants in Central and Maverick Squares. Surveys and market studies are planned to help identify problems and suggest solutions. Technical assistance will be made available to businessmen who want to improve their business methods. Design guidelines will be prepared to assist merchants in coordinating storefront rehabilitation in each shopping center and a program of financial incentives for such rehabilitation should be developed. Steps have already been taken to reduce crime and vandalism with the institution of police foot patrols during nighttime hours in all four shopping centers and with the installation of improved lighting in Maverick Square. New lighting should be installed in the other commercial areas in the future. A new off-street parking lot will be constructed on Porter Street near Central Square and more off-street parking should be provided for commercial areas. Parking meters have been repaired and on-street parking regulations are beginning to be more strictly enforced so as to reduce congestion caused by double parking. Funds have been allocated for a study of major street, sidewalk and signal changes to improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation in Central and Maverick Squares, the results of which will be hopefully implemented through the Urban Systems Program in the next fiscal year.

3. NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Issue

The development of regional transportation facilities which occurred after the residential community of East Boston was well established, has had a significant negative impact upon the quality of neighborhood life. The tunnels, highway and MBTA line disrupt the physical continuity of neighborhoods, generate noise and air pollution, and add to traffic and parking congestion on local streets. With the expansion of Logan Airport has come a myriad of challenges to the very survival of the residential community. Sections of East Boston are heavily impacted by aircraft noise and pollution. Massport purchases of property in abutting residential neighborhoods has created investor uncertainty and in some cases led to disinvestment and housing abandonment. Airport-related industries such as air freight and rent-a-car operations have been attracted to boundary areas between the airport and the Paris Street Flats and Jeffries Point neighborhoods, further disrupting the residential character of these areas. In addition, Massport has proposed the location of a container shipping facility at Piers 1-4 which could be incompatible with adjacent residential development.

Strategies

The community, the City and the State must work together to reduce the negative impacts caused by these transportation systems. A comprehensive circulation plan should be conducted addressing in particular the traffic and parking problems caused by the Sumner and Callahan Tunnels, the McClellan Highway, the MBTA, and the airport. Massport must be made more responsive to the needs of the East Boston community. Noise abatement measures, including the soundproofing of schools, must be undertaken. Equitable arrangements must be made for the relocation of Neptune Road residents, now living at the end of a major runway. Further expansion of the airport must be halted and properties owned by Massport in residential neighborhoods should be sold to residents of those neighborhoods. Buffer zones should be created between the airport and residential areas. In all its future work, Massport should be made to include community participation in its master planning process and to act only in accordance with plans achieved through a consensus involving the City, East Boston residents, and airport users.

4. CONTROL OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

Issue

Due to the changing nature of the regional economy and the general decline of industry in the inner city, East Boston has found itself with a number of underutilized properties that have development potential. Most of these are along the

waterfront and on the boundaries of the airport. A major issue for the future will be whether or not these properties will be developed in a fashion that is compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Strategies

The City should continue to plan for this potential development and insure that it is compatible with adjacent residential development. Working with the community, the City should inventory these sites, develop a plan for their future use, and take the most feasible measures for insuring that development on them occurs according to the generally accepted plan. Such measures would include enforcement of existing zoning when appropriate, rezoning, and acquisition of strategic development sites.

5. PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Issue

East Boston has an abundance of natural and scenic resources which are endangered. Air pollution is a significant problem. Sewage and other wastes pollute the waters surrounding "the island" and new developments encroach upon wetlands, marshes and scenic areas.

Strategies

The City should continue to monitor air and water quality in and around East Boston and work with appropriate agencies to reduce adverse impacts. The BRA's Urban Wilds Study should be continued to identify and assess all natural and scenic resources in East Boston and steps should be taken to use this information to protect these resources. Finally, efforts should be taken to insure that the planned transfer of the Belle Isle Marsh from Massport to the MDC is finalized.

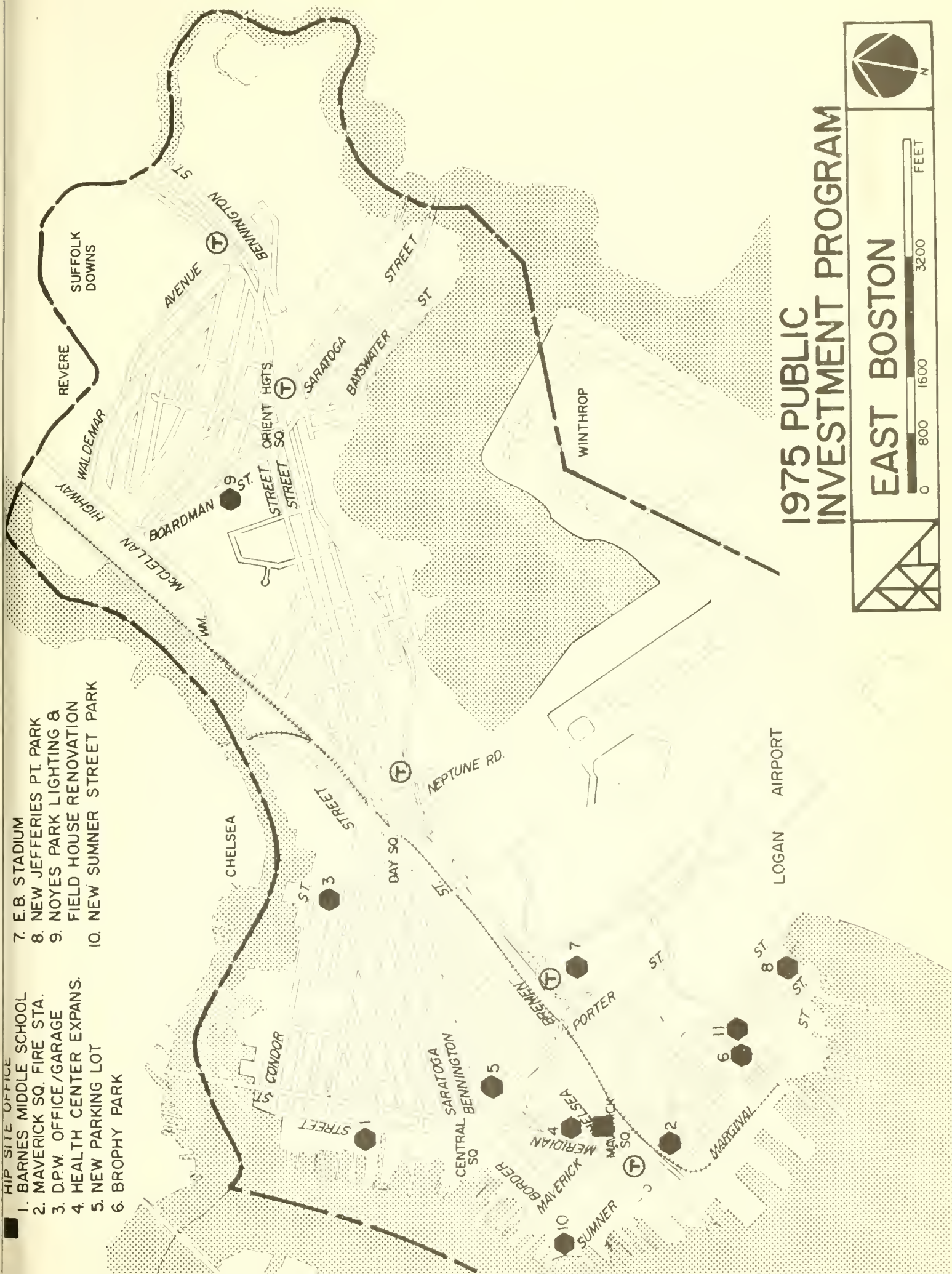
E. 1975 INVESTMENT PROGRAM

During the 1975 fiscal year, public investment program has been concentrated in housing, commercial center and neighborhood capital improvements. Allocated for housing are \$8.9 million for the Sumner Street Elderly Housing Development being readied for occupancy this summer, \$58,000 for the modernization of the Maverick Public Housing Project, \$25,000 for restoration and improvement of vacant lots in residential areas, and \$100,000 for the Mayor's Housing Improvement Program in East Boston. In an effort to revitalize commercial centers, \$20,000 is being spent on improving street lighting in Maverick Square, \$64,000 for traffic signal improvements in Maverick, Central and Day Squares, and \$160,000 for the construction of an off-street parking lot on Porter Street near Central Square. Also \$40,000 has been set aside for consultants to develop recommendations for traffic and parking improvements that can be implemented through the Urban Systems Program in Central and Maverick Squares.

Neighborhood capital improvements have constituted the largest portion of the 1975 investment program. A \$12.8 million new Barnes Middle School is now under construction. Plans are underway for a \$1.4 million fire house to be located near Maverick Square. A new waterfront park in Jeffries Point is being developed at a cost of \$1 million, while \$436,200 has been allocated for acquisition of another waterfront site for a park opposite the Maverick Housing Project. The expansion of the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center is being aided with \$250,000 in City funds. Improvements are being made to various playgrounds and recreational facilities, and a total of \$246,000 is being invested in residential street lighting and a tree planting program.

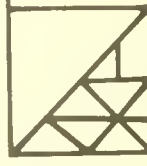
HIP SITE OFFICE

- 1. BARNES MIDDLE SCHOOL
- 2. MAVERICK SQ. FIRE STA.
- 3. DPW. OFFICE/GARAGE
- 4. HEALTH CENTER EXPANS.
- 5. NEW PARKING LOT
- 6. BROPHY PARK
- 7. E.B. STADIUM
- 8. NEW JEFFERIES PT. PARK
- 9. NOYES PARK LIGHTING & FIELD HOUSE RENOVATION
- 10. NEW SUMNER STREET PARK



1975 PUBLIC INVESTMENT PROGRAM

EAST BOSTON



F. FUTURE INVESTMENT NEEDS

In order to improve the quality of residential neighborhoods in East Boston a number of investments are needed. The Housing Improvement Program should be available and expanded for the next few years. In an effort to reinforce the investment which owner occupants make in their properties, the city should employ a code enforcement program which is sensitive to the needs of the East Boston community. New Housing Development, especially mixed income projects, is needed as the most appropriate reuse on the Waterfront. Rehabilitation of the Public Housing Project, and construction of a youth center are needed in the Orient Heights neighborhood.

The Commercial Centers in Day Square and Orient Heights, will need both private and public investment if they are to continue as community assets rather than become potential problem areas. The parking problem in all commercial centers demands that off-street lots be made available and amenities such as better lighting, trees, and benches should be provided.

Neighborhood capital improvements have constituted the largest portion of the 1975 investment program; this commitment should continue for the next several years. Emphasis should be placed on the acquisition and development of new and rehabilitated open space and recreational facilities; development of an industrial park and soundproofing and rehabilitation of schools.

In order to reduce disruption in residential neighborhoods, a comprehensive circulation study should be conducted to determine policies and investment needs for transportation improvements.

FUTURE INVESTMENT NEEDS as related to Issues, Strategies and 1975 Investment Program

<u>Issues</u>	<u>Strategies</u>	<u>1975 Investment Program</u>	<u>Future Investment Needs</u>
1. NEGATIVE INFLUENCES ON QUALITY OF RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS	Preserve & upgrade existing housing stock through a combination of rehabilitation & code enforcement incentives and through selective demolition of unsafe structures.	Mayor's Housing Improvement Program (MHIP) - \$100,000 Maverick Public Housing improvements - \$58,000	MHIP - 100 to 200 units per year Orient Heights Public Housing improvements
	Broaden housing options with new housing construction in a variety of types, sizes & costs.	Summer Street Elderly Housing Development (NDP I) - \$8,896,585	NDP II mixed income housing development (proposed)
	Improve maintenance of vacant lots by conducting clean-up programs and giving first refusal to abutters on sale of City-owned vacant lots.	Vacant Lots Program - \$25,000	Continued funding for Vacant Lots Program
	Reduce vandalism by providing youth activities programs.		New youth center in Orient Heights Additional youth activities programs.
	Reduce conflicts between residential and other land uses through zoning controls		

FUTURE INVESTMENT NEEDS as related to Issues, Strategies and 1975 Investment Program

<u>Issues</u>	<u>Strategies</u>	<u>1975 Investment Program</u>	<u>Future Investment Needs</u>
1. NEGATIVE INFLUENCES ON QUALITY OF RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS (cont'd)	Seek location of industrial uses in appropriate areas.		Acquisition of site for industrial park
	Improve existing recreational & open space facilities and acquire & develop additional ones.	Acquisition & development of new Jeffries Point Park - \$100,000 Acquisition of new Summer St. park - \$436,200 MDC acquisition of Suffolk Downs Drive-In site Transfer of Bell Isle Marsh to MDC for conservation area	New Orient Heights youth center Development of Summer St. park Expansion of Constitution Beach facilities (MDC) Golden Stairs Park improvements Acquisition & development of playground at London & Decatur Streets
		Brophy Park improvements - \$15,000 Summer & Lamson St. play area - \$100,000 E.B. Stadium improvements - \$60,000 Noyes Playground flood-lighting - \$200,000 Renovation of Noyes field-house - \$15,000	Central Square park improvements Prescott Square park improvements

FUTURE INVESTMENT NEEDS as related to Issues, Strategies and 1975 Investment Program

<u>Issues</u>	<u>Strategies</u>	<u>1975 Investment Program</u>	<u>Future Investment Needs</u>
1. NEGATIVE INFLUENCES ON QUALITY OF RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS (cont'd)	Improve private investment confidence by making capital improvements in strategic areas.	Street lighting - \$136,000 Tree planting - \$110,000 Expansion of Neighborhood Health Center - \$250,000 New Barnes Middle School - \$12,800,000 New Maverick Sq. fire station - \$1,400,000 New Public Works Office/Garage - \$145,000 Street & sidewalk improvements Water & sewer improvements Reconstruction of Curtis St. & Maverick St. bridges	Continuation of tree planting School soundproofing & renovation, e.g. E.B. High, Sherican Jr. High & Kennedy Elementary Schools School replacements. e.g. for Lyman & Alighieri Schools Rehabilitation or replacement of fire station at 360 Saratoga Rehabilitation or relocation of Central Sq. & Orient Heights public libraries Additional street & sidewalk improvements Additional water & sewer improvements Reconstruction of Summer St. & Porter St. bridges

FUTURE INVESTMENT NEEDS as related to Issues, Strategies and 1975 Investment Program

<u>Issues</u>	<u>Strategies</u>	<u>1975 Investment Program</u>	<u>Future Investment Needs</u>
2. DECLINE OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CENTERS	Improve business viability through technical assistance to merchants	Commercial Revitalization Program in Central & Maverick Squares	
	Increase shopping convenience through circulation & parking improvements.	Consultant study focusing on street, sidewalk, signal & sign changes to improve pedestrian & auto circulation in Central & Maverick Squares - \$40,000	Implementation of consultant recommendations as Federally funded Urban Systems Project
		Repair of parking meters & enforcement of on-street parking regulations	Acquisition & development of additional off-street parking in Central & Maverick Squares
		New parking lot off Porter St. - \$160,000	
		Traffic signal improvements at Maverick, Central & Day Squares - \$63,750	
	Enhance visual attractiveness of shopping area through storefront rehab & streetscape improvements		Provision of certain amenities as part of Urban Systems Project
			Storefront rehab incentive program (proposed)

FUTURE INVESTMENT NEEDS as related to Issues, Strategies and 1975 Investment Program

<u>Issues</u>	<u>Strategies</u>	<u>1975 Investment Program</u>	<u>Future Investment Needs</u>
2. DECLINE OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CENTERS (cont'd)	Reduce crime & vandalism through improved street lighting & police protection	New street lighting in Maverick Square - \$20,000 Foot patrolmen deployed in all four shopping centers	Street lighting improvements in Central Sq., Day Sq., & Orient Heights shopping areas
3. NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS	Reduce negative impact of Logan Airport on community		Soundproofing of schools Acquisition & development of critical buffer areas, e.g. unused railroad property along Bremen St.
	Oppose conversion of existing seaport facilities at Piers 1-4 to uses that would more seriously impact adjacent residential neighborhoods, e.g. auto storage or container facility.		Site preparation of Piers 1-4
	Reduce disruption caused to residential neighborhoods by tunnels, highway & MBTA line.		Conduct comprehensive circulation plan as recommended by TOPICS

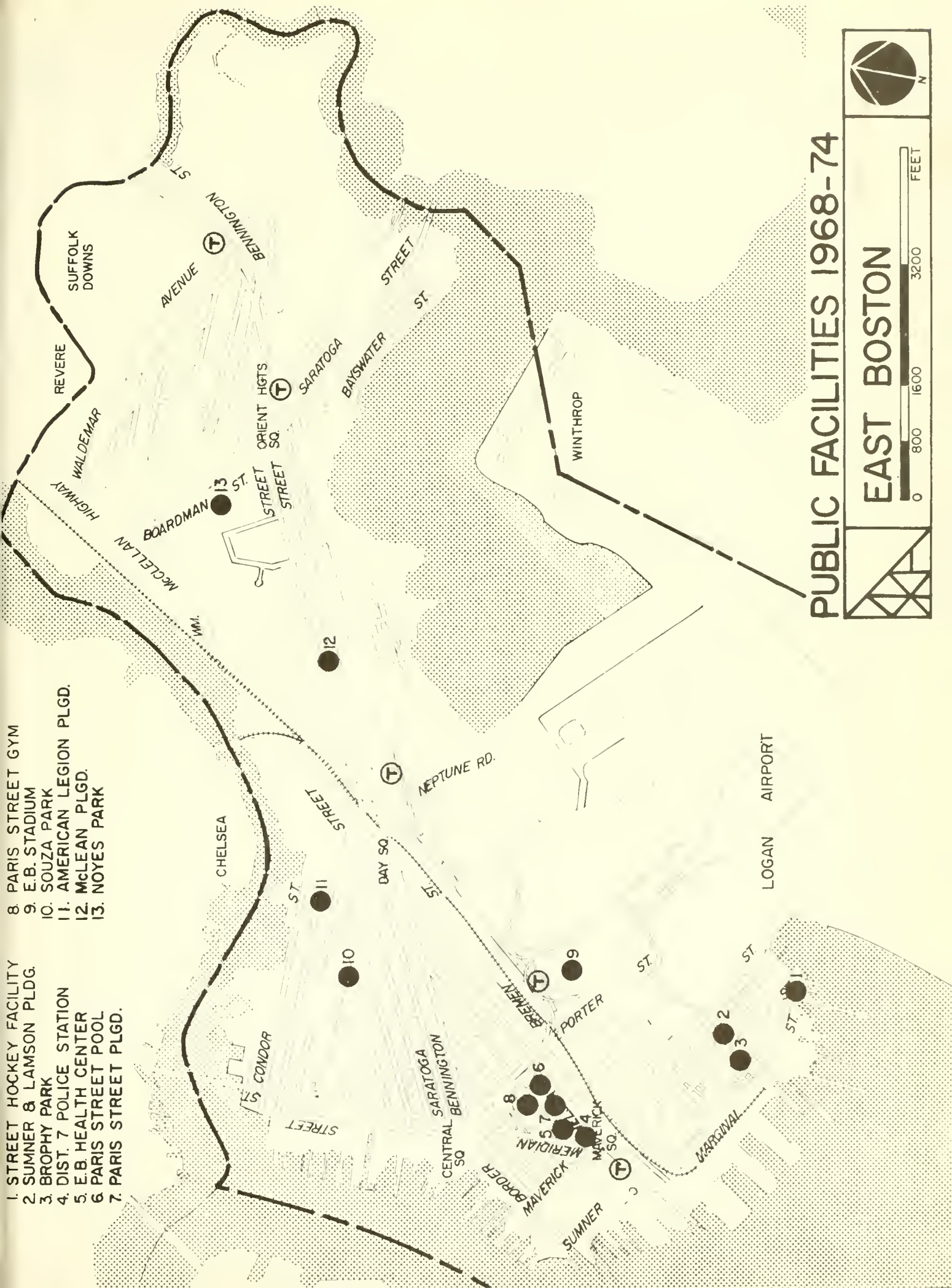
FUTURE INVESTMENT NEEDS as related to Issues, Strategies and 1975 Investment Program

<u>Issues</u>	<u>Strategies</u>	<u>1975 Investment Program</u>	<u>Future Investment Needs</u>
4. CONTROL OF NEW DEVELOPMENT	Make new development consistent with goal of protecting & enhancing residential neighborhoods		
5. PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES	Reduce air & water pollution; protect wetlands and other natural & scenic resources		Acquisition of fee or easement to critical properties, e.g. Belle Isle Marsh

APPENDIX (Maps)

1. STREET HOCKEY FACILITY
2. SUMNER & LAMSON PLDG.
3. BROPHY PARK
4. DIST. 7 POLICE STATION
5. E.B. HEALTH CENTER
6. PARIS STREET POOL
7. PARIS STREET PLGD.

8. PARIS STREET GYM
9. E.B. STADIUM
10. SOUZA PARK
11. AMERICAN LEGION PLGD.
12. McLEAN PLGD.
13. NOYES PARK



PUBLIC FACILITIES 1968-74

EAST BOSTON

FEET

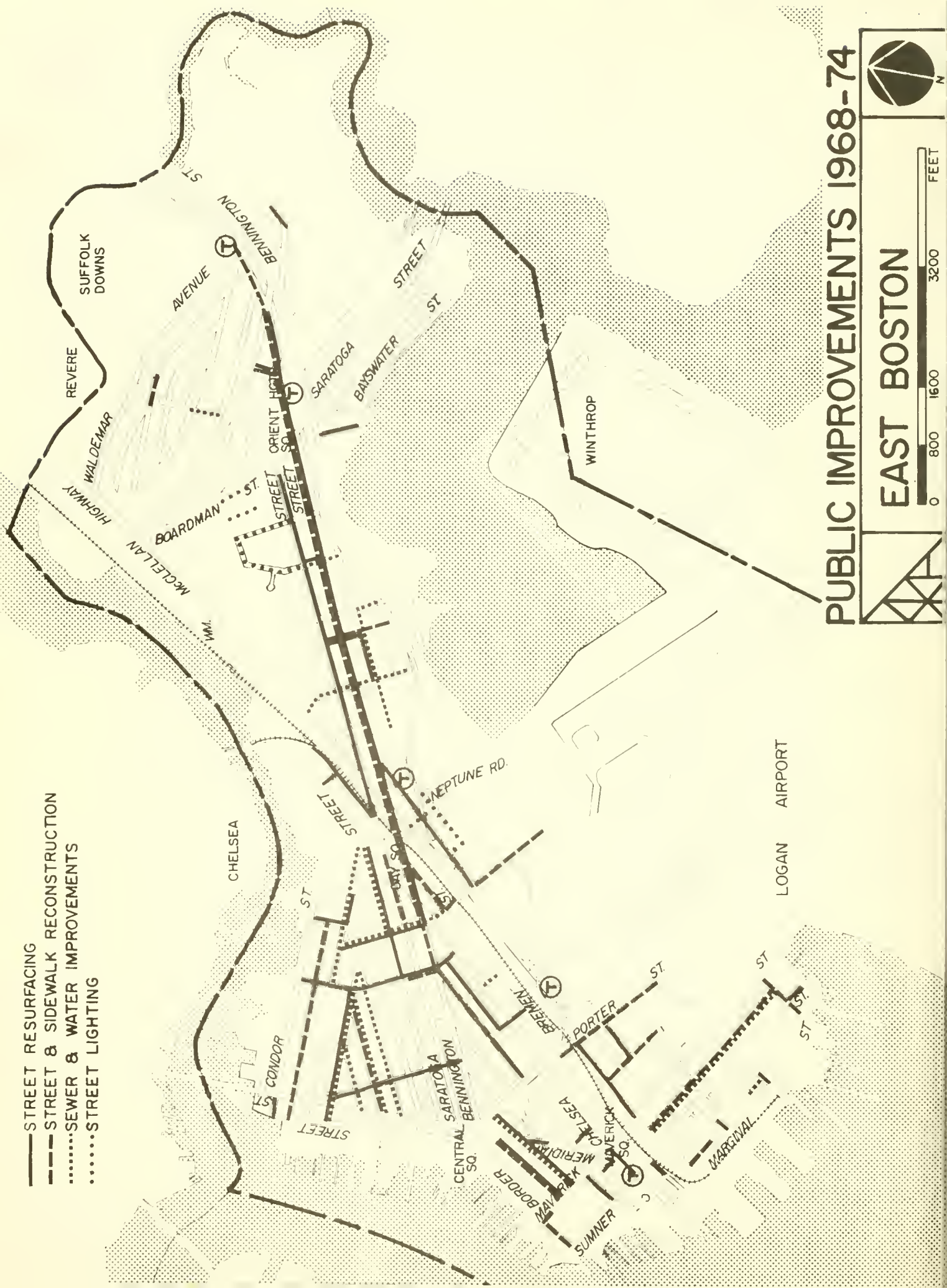
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- STREET RESURFACING
- - - STREET & SIDEWALK RECONSTRUCTION
- SEWER & WATER IMPROVEMENTS
- STREET LIGHTING



PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS 1968-74

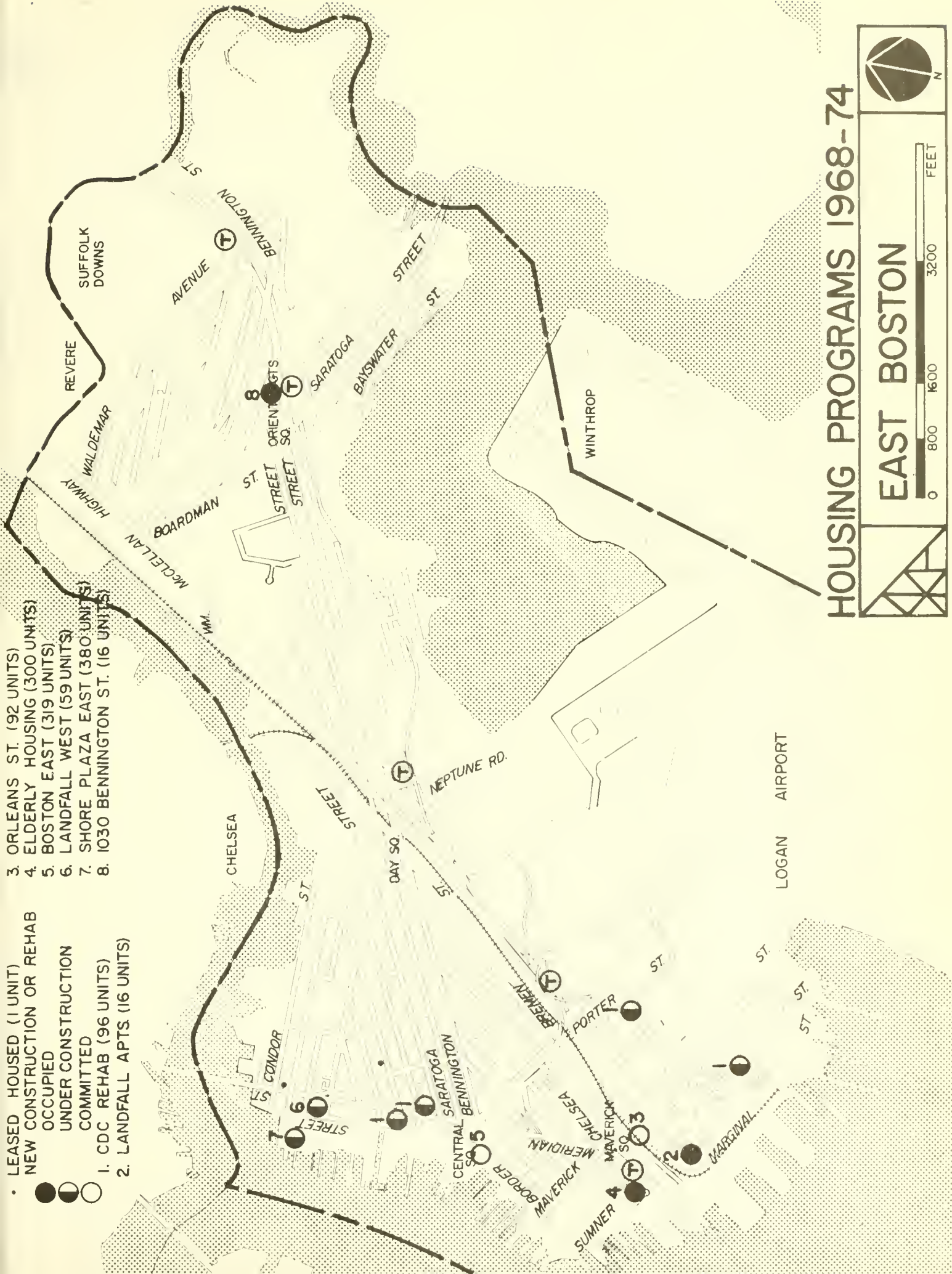


EAST BOSTON

0 800 1600 3200 FEET

- LEASED HOUSED (1 UNIT)
 - NEW CONSTRUCTION OR REHAB OCCUPIED
 - UNDER CONSTRUCTION
 - COMMITTED
1. CDC REHAB (96 UNITS)
 2. LANDFALL APTS (16 UNITS)

3. ORLEANS ST. (92 UNITS)
4. ELDERLY HOUSING (300 UNITS)
5. BOSTON EAST (319 UNITS)
6. LANDFALL WEST (59 UNITS)
7. SHORE PLAZA EAST (380 UNITS)
8. 1030 BENNINGTON ST. (16 UNITS)



HOUSING PROGRAMS 1968-74

EAST BOSTON



